

**Free Clinic at First Presbyterian Church
406 Grant Street, Wausau, Wisconsin
January 29, 2018**

BUSINESS PLAN

Mission/Purpose

The mission of First Presbyterian Church Free Clinic is to serve as the body of Christ in the world. As a community of faith, we will bear witness to God's saving grace by offering compassionate and competent health care to the sick, poor and dispossessed in our community. To these ends, we will offer high quality basic, primary care services to low-income, uninsured residents of the area. Services will be provided at no charge to the recipient. Initially, the clinic will focus on providing acute care services (e.g., colds, flu, minor injuries) to both adult and pediatric populations. Over time, the clinic plans to expand services to include management of chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes, hypertension), as well as preventive care. Area medical, nursing and other healthcare practitioners, who are volunteering their time, will staff the clinic, along with various administrative and support personnel.

The clinic is committed to collaborating with community resources to target its services to meet unmet needs (e.g. homeless population, undocumented immigrants, etc.) and to assist patients in obtaining other needed services. Moreover, the clinic will assist patients in exploring available health insurance coverage options (e.g., Medicaid or ACA Marketplace plans), so patients might gain access to the traditional health care delivery system. The clinic sees its role as patient advocate and community partner as well as a pathway into the larger health care system.

Statement of Need

Wausau and Marathon County are blessed to have extraordinary health care resources; two world-class hospitals, numerous primary care and specialty medical clinics, two Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), a respected local public health department, the well-known North Central Health Care behavioral health, addictions and long term care services, and many recognized health professions training institutions, including the Medical College of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin Family Practice Residency Program, and nursing and allied health programs at Rasmussen and NTC. The community social service system is equally robust and aligned.

Despite these excellent resources, people sometimes still fall through the cracks. A substantial number of residents lack health insurance coverage for a myriad of reasons. These might include: unemployment, partial employment, lack of benefits through the workplace, cost-sharing expense, undocumented immigration status, as well as language, cultural and/or (health) literacy barriers. Others, who are

technically insured, may have coverage that only covers inpatient care or have such a high deductible or co-pay that routine primary care is unaffordable. A major medical event and/or hospitalization could lead to extreme financial hardship. For all intents and purposes, these individuals are uninsured for primary care. In addition, eligibility for Medicaid (BadgerCare) in Wisconsin has been scaled back in recent years. We are all aware of the many challenges to the continuation of the Affordable Care Act.

Adding further urgency to our efforts, the Washington Post reported in mid-January on a Gallup survey that found over 3.2 million more Americans lost their health insurance coverage during 2017. This has occurred after years of decline in the numbers of uninsured. At the end of 2017, 12.2% of U.S. adults lacked health insurance, up from 10.9% at the end of 2016. The percentages for uninsured are substantially higher for minorities, including Blacks and Hispanics. Many uninsured people live in poverty.

Several community agencies were considered to host the Free Clinic. First Presbyterian Church offered many advantages, including: location, interest, availability, congruency with current mission activity and tax-exempt status. For instance, FPC has operated a food pantry for over 20 years, serving the needs of food-insecure local residents. To meet other identified unmet needs, FPC organized Sunday Community Suppers in partnership with area churches and organizations in 2005; they haven't missed a Sunday since. FPC has recently started a "Welcoming the Stranger" initiative, reaching out to immigrants in the community. FPC believes its downtown location ideally positions it to serve the changing neighborhood.

Secondary benefits of offering a Free Clinic at FPC, Wausau include: 1) reducing inappropriate over-utilization of hospital emergency departments for conditions which could be more cost-effectively managed on an outpatient, ambulatory basis, 2) reducing uncompensated care costs (ED and subsequent hospitalization) resulting from ambulatory-sensitive healthcare conditions (which healthcare systems must absorb or pass on to insured patients), 3) improved quality of life and functioning for members of society who are often unemployable due to untreated health conditions, and 4) improved identification, management and control of potentially communicable diseases. Many area health care providers and systems have been asked to support and endorse this proposal.

The FPC Free Clinic will be modeled, in part, after the St. Vincent de Paul Free Clinic (hereafter SVDP) in Merrill, with whom the Wausau organizing group has extensively collaborated. St. Vincent de Paul also operates a free clinic in Marshfield. Because Free Clinics are often small scale and voluntarily operated by religious or civic organizations, exact numbers are hard to determine. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services website lists 58 free or low cost clinics in the state (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/free.htm>). The Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, an affiliate of the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, states on their website (<http://www.wafclinics.org>)

there are over 90 free and charitable clinics in Wisconsin, serving the growing uninsured population. Wausau is the last major city in Wisconsin NOT to have a Free Clinic.

Eligibility for Services

Residents of Wausau and Marathon County who are:

- Uninsured (those who are underinsured will be evaluated on a case by case basis)
- Under 65 years of age,
- Income at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPL)

Clinic Location, Hours and Facility

The clinic will be located in soon-to-be remodeled, dedicated clinic space on the lower level of First Presbyterian Church, 406 Grant Street, Wausau, WI 54401 (across the street from City Hall). Initially, the clinic will operate from 2 to 6 PM the first and third Wednesdays of every month. Once operations are running smoothly, and additional medical providers and support staff are recruited and trained, the clinic plans to expand hours to meet needs and demand.

As envisioned, the clinic will be comprised of:

- Central reception/waiting area, with comfortable seating for 6-8, including tables and lamps;
- Intake/counseling rooms for confidential initial patient interviews, history taking, insurance counseling and referral linkages;
- Patient exam rooms (4), each equipped with a hand washing sink, exam table and lamp, provider stool, side chair, storage cabinet, otoscope-ophthalmoscope array, and writing surface;
- Provider/nurse charting area, with expansive writing surface, space for medical records file cabinets and shelving for reference materials;
- Small dictation room for providers;
- Storage room for sterile supplies and medications, including a small refrigerator for perishable vaccines and medications;
- Storage room for non-sterile equipment and supplies, including a refrigerator for lab specimens;
- Separate men and women's rest room facilities, located across the hall from the clinic area.

Our plan is to obtain grant funding from area foundation(s) to allow for the remodeling of the space to accommodate the clinic, including making the restrooms ADA accessible. Free Clinic staff will be able to use other parts of the church, such as the library, meeting rooms and kitchen, to support their operations. Ample off-street parking is available.

Sponsorship and Support

The clinic will be a mission/outreach service of First Presbyterian Church of Wausau, offered in cooperation with area medical providers, health systems and personnel (working and retired) who have agreed to volunteer their time, talents, energies, and in some cases supplies, to this worthwhile, humanitarian cause. Area healthcare providers and systems that have been (will be) asked to endorse and support the establishment of the FPC Free Clinic, as proposed herein, include:

(Proposed list)

- Marshfield Clinic (Dr. Oz)
- Aspirus Wausau Hospital and Clinics (Paula/Rosemary/Jeff)
- Ascension Healthcare (Dr. Oz)
- Medical College of Wisconsin (Jeff)
- Bridge Community Clinic (Jeff)
- Marathon County Health Department (Jeff)
- St. Vincent de Paul Free Clinic, Merrill (Paula/Rosemary)
- United Way of Marathon County (Chuck)
- University of Wisconsin, Family Practice Residency (Paula/Rosemary)
- Catholic Charities (Paula/Rosemary)
- North Central Health Care (Jeff)

Personnel and Staff

- Medical Director: Jeffrey Oswald, MD, FAAFP, Marshfield Clinic
- Nursing/Clinic Supervisors: Paula Vogt, RN, BSN; Rosemary Benson, RN, ADN, Aspirus Wausau Hospital (retired)
- Mid-level Providers (Certified Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants): To Be Determined (TBD)
- Nursing/Medical Assistants/CNAs: TBD
- Managerial/Administration: Jeffrey Todd, MS, CMPE, Aspirus Clinics (retired); former County Public Health Officer and Administrator, Community Clinic of Northwest Illinois
- Certified Application Counselors/Insurance Navigators: TBD
- Reception/Medical Records/Admissions: TBD
- Other Volunteers: TBD

Initially, all staff of the clinic will be volunteers, offering their time, energy and skills to serve the sick and less-privileged members of our community as acts of compassion and faith. We will use a rigorous applicant screening process, including verification of education, licensure, employment and references, to assure volunteers are fully vetted for the duties they will perform in the clinic. The Medical Director will have the final say on all clinical staff assigned. All staff will be evaluated periodically to assure high quality medical care is being provided, while

the needs of the volunteer also are being met. SVDP Free Clinic in Merrill uses some paid staff to augment volunteers, and as need grows, this option will be explored. The senior clinical staff of the FPC Free Clinic will provide training and evaluation of staff.

Policies and Procedures

Using SVDP as a model, policies and procedures will be developed, periodically reviewed and revised by an internal clinical committee, headed by the Medical Director, in the following areas:

1. Admissions/eligibility criteria
2. Intake procedures, including patient social and medical history
3. Cleaning of exam rooms, reception area, restrooms and equipment
4. Patient care guidelines, including continuity of care, follow-up and referrals
5. Credentialing background checks
6. Nursing practices/duties/responsibilities
7. Receptionist duties
8. Medical records: documentation, completion, access, storage, security, retention, sharing
9. Patient confidentiality/HIPAA compliance
10. Medication and pharmacy policies
11. Quality assurance/evaluation
12. Security and emergency procedures, both personal and facility

In addition, the FPC Free Clinic is in the process of joining the Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, Inc., which has recently published *Standards of Excellence* for the network. The FPC Free Clinic plans to apply for a *Seal of Excellence* at the appropriate level for a start-up clinic. Measures of success will be developed in consultation with area health facilities, to assure system improvements as well as individual patient indicators are positively impacted by the clinic.

Labs and Imaging

The FPC Free Clinic anticipates performing a delimited range of Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA)-waived lab tests in-house for diagnostic purposes, including:

- Quick Strep
- Accu-Chek®
- Urine dipstick
- Pregnancy

Other labs that might be needed and ordered by the providers, and all imaging tests, will be referred to area medical facilities, based on prior arrangements, and will be offered at no cost to the patient.

Medications

An agreement has been worked out with Young's Pharmacy on Bridge Street. Most prescriptions would be ordered from a pre-established \$4.00 medication list (formulary). Outside funding to cover the \$4.00 dispensing charge per each prescription would be obtained, so cost will not be a barrier to patients.

A very limited supply of non-psychotropic medications (e.g., antibiotics, NSAIDs) would be securely stored and dispensed in clinic, as needed and ordered by the providers. The clinic will have a NO NARCOTICS/OPIATES POLICY.

Equipment and Supplies

The organizers of the Free Clinic, including Dr. Oswald and Ms. Vogt and Ms. Benson, have been busy amassing equipment and supplies, in anticipation of clinic start-up. A partial list of equipment and supplies that will be needed to open and operate the clinic has been developed and is available upon request. Requests have been made to area health systems to donate equipment and supplies, initially and on an ongoing basis.

Facility: Remodeling and Ongoing Maintenance

As described above, several hundred square feet of space on the lower level of the church will be remodeled to accommodate the clinic (see attached Plan B - 1/12/18). The space will be dedicated to the exclusive use of the Free Clinic. Clinical staff will actively participate in the design of the remodel. Once the remodel design is acceptable to the clinical team and church leadership, and architectural plans are finalized, an application will be submitted to the City of Wausau, requesting that a "Conditional Use Permit" be issued for our property, allowing for a "Health and Medical Institution." We are currently zoned R-4 General Residence District. Once the City approves the "Conditional Use," the FPC Free Clinic will apply to area foundations for grant funding to support the remodeling project. We estimate total costs of the remodel may be on the order of \$30,000, perhaps more. Other grants and funding may be sought from area charitable entities, including health systems like Aspirus, Ascension and Marshfield, to support the ongoing cost of clinic operations. These costs, while expected to be relatively modest, would include but are not limited to: cleaning services, office and medical supplies, pharmacy, equipment maintenance, telephone and Internet service, postage and the like. As part of its commitment to mission, FPC will assume general overhead costs, such as heat, light, electricity, parking lot, Wi-Fi, etc. At the request of the Church Session, a full security audit of the FPC facility is to be performed, with recommendations prioritized and implemented, prior to start-up of clinic

operations. This will include evaluation of security cameras, egress, security doors, locks, access, communications and related matters.

Telecommunications/Internet

Even though individual staff will most likely have their own personal Smart phones on hand, we plan to install a telephone line for exclusive use of Free Clinic personnel, and strategically locate wireless phones in the facility. The church plans to install a Wi-Fi booster on the lower level to improve Internet connectivity for the clinic.

Administration and Governance

An Advisory Committee will be created to help guide and offer input to the Free Clinic, as well as help connect the Free Clinic to the wider community. Initially, the Advisory Committee will be comprised of the Medical Director, the Senior Nursing Supervisors, and 3-4 representatives of First Presbyterian Church with interest and background in healthcare operations. Other members may be added to the Advisory Committee as community partners are identified and come aboard. These additional members might include representatives of funding agencies, area health care systems and pharmacies, community social services and patient populations served. In the area of patient care/clinical operations and policies, this group would be advisory only, as the Medical Director will retain full authority in such matters.

Interagency Relations and Coordination

The above-mentioned Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the Medical Director and senior nursing supervisors, would be charged with establishing and maintaining healthy interagency relations and coordination of services with the larger community.

Liability and Malpractice Coverage; Tort Immunity

First Presbyterian Church has notified its liability insurance carrier, Church Mutual, of the intended Free Clinic operation, and has been assured this would be a covered activity, subject to limitations of the policy. Additional professional liability coverage will be obtained, as recommended by our carrier. Pursuant to provisions of Wisconsin Revised Statutes, Chapter 146.89, the FPC Free Clinic, along with its Volunteer Health Care Providers (VHCP), will submit an application to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services seeking "state agency status" for providers for the purpose of affording tort liability protections.

Funding and Financial Operations

First Presbyterian Church, through its Mission Team, will create a special restricted account to support the Free Clinic. This account will receive and acknowledge monetary donations given to benefit the Free Clinic under the name of FPC, a 501

(C)(3) tax-exempt organization. In addition, this fund will disburse funds necessary to support the operations of the clinic, such as supplies, telephone, reference materials, membership dues in WAFCC and/or NAFCC, cleaning services and medications. All expenditures in support of the clinic will be made pursuant to a budget, as recommended by the Advisory Committee and the Mission team, and approved by the Session of FPC. The Medical Director or other designated personnel shall be authorized to approve expenditures, subject to budgetary limitations.

Authored by Jeffrey Todd, First Presbyterian Church, December 14, 2017 (revised Jan. 26-29, 2018)